SKETCHES:

OR

ESSAYS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

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PREFACE.

THE Author of the following Papers chuſes to call them *Sketches*; as the leaſt imperfect amongſt them is to a laboured Treatiſe what the Painter's Outlines, or his firſt rude Draughts, are

are to a finiſhed Picture. This Declaration he hopes will be accepted by the proper Judges of Writing as a ſufficient Apology for any thing, either in Thought or Expreſſion, that may be found careleſs or incorrect in his *Eſſays*. He owns he could have given theſe little looſe Fragments much bolder Strokes, as well as more delicate Touches: But as an Author's Renown depends at preſent upon the Mobility, he dreads the Danger of

writing too well; and feels the Value of his own Labour too ſenſibly to beſtow it where, in all Probability, it might only ſerve to depreciate his Performance.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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SKETCHES.

SKETCHES.

Of LANGUAGE.

ALMOST every one that can read, pretends to judge of the Author's Style, as it is called: But how few are there who really know good Language from bad! Even the beſt Judges are ſometimes divided in their Opinions; for want, it would ſeem, of a common Standard by which the Merits of dif-

ferent Languages, as well as of different Writers in the ſame Language, might be compared. If I was to reduce my own private Idea of the beſt Language to a Definition; I ſhould call it the ſhorteſt, cleareſt, and eaſieſt Way of expreſſing one's Thoughts, by the moſt harmonious Arrangement of the beſt choſen Words, both for Meaning and Sound. The beſt Language is ſtrong and expreſſive, without Stiffneſs or Affectation; ſhort and conciſe, without being either obſcure or ambiguous; and eaſy and flowing and diſengaged, without one undetermined or ſuperfluous Word.

Of GENIUS.

THERE is a Standard of Right and Wrong in the Nature of Things, of Beauty and Deformity, both in the natural and moral World. And as different Minds happen to be more or leſs exquiſite, the more or leſs ſenſibly do they perceive the various Degrees of Good and Bad, and are the more or leſs ſuſceptible of

of being charmed with what is right or beautiful, and diſguſted with what is wrong or deformed. It is chiefly this Senſibility that conſtitutes Genius; to which a ſound Head and a good Heart are as eſſential as a delicate Imagination. And a Man of true Genius muſt neceſſarily have as exquiſite a Feeling of the moral Beauties, as of whatever is great or beautiful in the Works of Nature, or maſterly in the Arts which imitate Nature, in Poetry, Painting, Statuary, and Muſic.

On the other ſide, where the Heart is very bad, the Genius and Taſte, if there happen to be any Pretenſions to them, will be found ſhocking and unnatural. NERO would be nothing leſs than a Poet; but his Verſes were what one may call moſt *villainouſly* bad. His Taſte of Magnificence and Luxury was horribly glaring, extravagant and unnatural to the laſt Degree.

CALIGULA's Taſte was ſo outragiouſly wrong, that he deteſted the Works of the ſweet MANTUAN Poet more paſſionately

than ever MOECENAS admired them; and if VIRGIL had unfortunately lived down to thoſe Times in which that Monſter appeared, he would probably have been tortured to Death for no other Crime but that he wrote naturally, and like an honeſt Man.

True Genius may be ſaid to conſiſt of a perfect Poliſh of Soul, which receives and reflects the Images that fall upon it, without Warping or Diſtortion. And this fine Poliſh of Soul is, I believe, conſtantly attended with what Philoſophers call the Moral Truth.

There are Minds which receive Objects truly, and feel the Impreſſions they ought naturally to make, in a very lively Manner, but want the Faculty of reflecting them; as there are People who, I ſuppoſe, feel all the Charms of Poetry without being Poets themſelves.

Of

Of Taste.

OUR Notion of Taſte may be eaſily underſtood by what has been ſaid upon the Subject of Genius; for mere good Taſte is nothing elſe but Genius without the Power of Execution.

It muſt be born; and is to be improved chiefly by being accuſtomed, and the earlier the better, to the moſt exquiſite Objects of Taſte in its various Kinds. For the Taſte in Writing and Painting, and in every thing elſe, is inſenſibly formed upon what we are accuſtomed to; as well as Taſte in eating and drinking. One who from his Youth has been uſed to drink nothing but heavy diſmal Port, will not immediately acquire a Reliſh for Claret or Burgundy.

In the moſt ſtupid Ages there is more good Taſte than one would at firſt Sight imagine. Even the preſent, abuſe it with what contemptuous epithets you pleaſe, cannot be totally void of it. As long as

there are noble humane and generous Diſpoſitions amongſt Mankind, there muſt be good Taſte. For in general, I don't ſay always, the Taſte will be in Proportion to thoſe moral Qualities and that Senſibility of Mind from which they take their Riſe. And while many, amongſt the Great and the Learned, are allowed to have Taſte for no better Reaſon than that it is their own Opinion, it is often poſſeſſed by thoſe who are not conſcious of it, and dream as little of pretending to it as to a Star and Garter. An honeſt Farmer, or Shepherd, who is acquainted with no Language but what is ſpoke in his own County, may have a much truer Reliſh of the *Engliſh* Writers than the moſt dogmatical Pedant that ever erected himſelf into a Commentator, and from his *Gothic* Chair, with an ill-bred Arrogance, dictated falſe Criticiſm to the gaping Multitude.

But even thoſe who are endued with good natural Taſte, often judge implicitly and by rote, without ever conſulting their own Taſte. Inſtances of this paſſive

Indo-

Indolence, or rather this Unconſciouſneſs of one's own Faculties, appear every Day; not only in the fine Arts, but in Caſes where the mere *Taſte*, according to the original meaning of the Word, is alone concerned. For I am poſitive there are many thouſauds who, if they were to bring their own Palate to a ſevere Examination, would diſcover that they really find a more delicious Flavour in Mutton than in Veniſon, in Flounder than in Turbut, and yet prefer middling or bad Veniſon to the beſt Mutton; that is, what is ſcarceſt and deareſt, and conſequently what is, from the Folly of Mankind, the moſt in Vogue, to what is really the moſt agreeable to their own private Taſte.

In Matter of Taſte, the Public, for the moſt part, ſuffers itſelf to be led by a few who perhaps are really no Judges; but who, under the Favour of ſome Advantages of Title, Place, or Fortune, ſet up for Judges, and are implicitly followed even by thoſe who have Taſte. Theſe waſhy Dictators have learnt

at

at School to admire ſuch Authors as have for Ages been poſſeſſed of an indiſputed Renown: But they would never have been the firſt to have diſcovered Strokes of true Genius in a cotemporary Writer, tho' they had lived at the Court of AUGUSTUS or of Q. ELIZABETH.

So undiſtinguiſhing is our Taſte, that if the flatteſt Dunce this fruitful Age can boaſt of, could by ſome artful impoſture prepoſſeſs the Public, that the moſt inſipid of all his own Bread-ſauce Compoſitions, to be publiſhed next Winter, was a Piece of MILTON's, or any other celebrated Author, recovered from Duſt and Obſcurity, it would be received with univerſal Applauſe, and perhaps be tranſlated into *French* before the Town had doated ſix Weeks upon it. One might venture to ſay too, that if a Work of true Spirit and Genius was to be introduced into the World, under the Name of ſome Writer of low Reputation, it would be rejected even by the greateſt part of thoſe who pretend to lead the Taſte. And no wonder,

while

while an eminent Vintner has miſtaken his own Old Hock at Nine Shillings the Bottle for that at Five.

Of TURGID WRITING.

NOISE and Bluſter is what paſſes for Sublime with the great Majority of Readers; and there are People who think nothing can be ſtrong or ſolid but what is clumſey. Yet the genteel Dignity of WHITEHALL, and the elegant chearful Simplicity of St. PAUL's in COVENT GARDEN, may ſtand as long as that purſe-proud Wittol the TREASURY, or even the ſquat Solidity of the HORSE GUARDS.

Unnatural, forced, exaggerated Swelling, whether in Sentiments or Language, is owing to falſe Taſte and want of true Genius. The HERCULES of *Goltzius* is that very Sublime in Perſon. It is intended to expreſs the moſt exceſſive Robuſtneſs of Figure: but the Painter, in endeavouring to repreſent the human Form in its utmoſt Degree of Strength, has aggravated

gravated the Demi-god into a mere awkward Monſter; as ridiculous a Giant as either of the Brothers at *Guildhall*.

To take it in another View, that clumſey Robuſtneſs of Manner (which, by the way, does not partake of true Vigour, for that always performs its Buſineſs without ſtraining) is the ſame Thing to the ſpirited Eaſe which is neceſſary to good Writing, that the awkward Efforts of a huge, heavy, ill-ſhaped Dray-horſe, and a lame one too, are to the eaſy Actions of the moſt ſupple ARABIAN that ever was dreſt by ST. AMOUR.

That Writing can never be very good which is not eaſy; but it does not follow that all eaſy Writing is good. Writing may be very eaſy, and yet, Heaven knows, very inſipid. And when you begin to ſuſpect that your Writing is eaſy indeed but wants Spirit, the wiſeſt Thing you can do is to let your Pen drop and go to Bed.

Of Affectation *of* Wit, *and* Florid Writing.

It is not always ſo eaſy to get rid of an impertinent Companion as of a ſilly Book; otherwiſe to be for ever aiming at Wit would be as teizing and intolerable in Writing as in Converſation. Too much even of genuine Wit is cloying, and the Vanity of diſplaying it inceſſantly will fatigue and diſguſt every Reader whoſe Taſte is true. Olives, Caveare, Anchovies, and *Dutch* Herrings, do very well in their Place; but, in the name of all the hoſpitable Powers, don't oblige us to dine upon them. Let us firſt lay a Foundation of good plain Beef or Mutton, if you pleaſe: for there is no living upon Pickles or Sweet-meats alone.

The Ground-work of every Performance, even of thoſe which admit or require the greateſt Profuſion of Ornament, ought to be plain and ſimple. Obſerve Nature: In the Meadow, the ſweet green,

green, which never dazzles the Sight, is the predominant Colour; while the gaudy Flowers, red, white, yellow, blue, and purple, are careleſsly interſperſed. This is infinitely more pleaſing and beautiful than that inſipid, childiſh, uncomfortable Bauble called a Flower-knot; and the wild Variety of the Woods as far excells the richeſt Plantation of flowering Shrubs. I would not be above taking a Hint even from the mechanic Arts: If a ſuit of Cloaths is overcharged with Lace, it becomes taudry and ungenteel. In every Work, the true Taſte is to diſpoſe the Ornaments with Eaſe and Propriety, and not to be affectedly or too oſtentatiouſly prodigal of them. By this Means you beſtow upon your Performance an elegant Richneſs, and ſuch a modeſt Dignity as will pleaſe every true Eye; tho' it may quite eſcape the Notice of the Vulgar, and falſe Critics of all Ranks, who delight in nothing but what is glaring, tawdry, and oſtentatious. —— No, I beg their Pardon: For they are ſometimes in Rap-

Raptures, or ſeem to be ſo, with what is altogether inſipid.

Let the Ornaments be never ſo well executed, if they are not eaſily and naturally introduced, they will have an awkward Effect. The moſt beautiful Woman may diſguſt you by Oſtentation and a declared Intention to charm. As often as it is poſſible to contrive it ſo, the Ornaments ſhould be, or at leaſt appear to be, of ſome Uſe towards the main Deſign of the Work: But when they are bluntly produced, and with too barefaced a Purpoſe to dazzle or entertain, inſtead of your Admiration, they raiſe your Contempt. A Maſque, a Coronation, or a Proceſſion upon our Stage, is, for the moſt part, an inſipid, tawdry, tireſome Shew. But if it was really an Ornament, to introduce it with Propriety and Grace, it ought to be contrived as an Incident to help on the Buſineſs of the Piece: as in the Maſque in ROMEO and JULIET; and the Funeral Proceſſion, ſuch as it is, in RICHARD *the Third*; which, notwithſtanding ſome want

of

of *Decorum*, as the Critics call it, and of Probability in the Scene, has ſtill ſome Kind of Pretence to aſſiſt in the Buſineſs of the Fable.

To conclude: The ornamental Parts of a Work coſt the leaſt Trouble to a Writer who has any Luxuriance of Imagination. To ſupport the plain Parts with an eaſy Dignity, ſo as they ſhall neither become flat on the one hand, nor diſguſtingly ſtiff on the other, is a much more difficult Taſk. And yet if you ſucceed never ſo well here, you'll receive little Thanks from the Generality of Readers; who will be apt to imagine they could eaſily perform the ſame Kind of Work themſelves, till they come to try it.

Of Obscure Writing.

As the firſt End of all Writing and Speaking is to be underſtood, it ſeems to follow that Obſcurity muſt be the greateſt Fault in either. One would think

think it needleſs to inſiſt upon this; yet there are Readers ſo abſurd as to admire an Author the more for every now and then plunging into the Unintelligible: as a Daſh of Myſtery procures more Reverence from weak Minds to any Scheme of Religion than its moſt virtuous or moſt rational precepts. Some clumſey Scholars too, who muſt needs be making awkward Love to the ſcornful Muſes, and tumbling them with their coarſe Paws, when they come to an obſcure Paſſage in an Author, whom they are determined to admire, tell us we muſt not always expect the ſame Clearneſs in Writers of the firſt Claſs as in the more inferior ones. Such is their Cant even in talking of Dramatic Writing, in which Obſcurity is more unpardonable than almoſt in any other Kind of Production. But the dulleſt and moſt ſhallow of thoſe Critics could write obſcurely himſelf; and if he writes much he muſt have *ill Luck* not to do it ſometimes. For to write obſcurely requires no

other Talent or Skill than to expreſs one's Meaning imperfectly; or if that is not enough, to write without any Meaning at all. However, amongſt a different Kind of Critics, Perſpicuity has always been reckoned an eſſential Quality to good Writing; and if ſometimes a great Author is found deficient in this Article, it only ſhews how difficult it is to expreſs ſome Things with Clearneſs and Eaſe. For one may very ſafely preſume that no good Writer, where it was prudent to ſpeak out, ever expreſt himſelf obſcurely from Choice.

Of the Modern Art *of* Spelling.

AN Author ſeems reduced to great Extremities, who flies to new Spellings to diſtinguiſh himſelf.

Theſe Innovations are pedantic and conceited Trifles; and the beſt, or rather the only good Reaſon for ever altering a long eſtabliſhed Spelling is, that the Writing may come the nearer to the Pronunciation.

ciation. But our Reformers in the Art of Spelling, who at preſent chiefly confine themſelves to one Claſs of Words, to Subſtantive Nouns and Verbs derived from the LATIN, ſuch as *Honour*, *Favour*, *Labour*, while they write *Honor*, *Favor*, *Labor*, increaſe the Diſtance between the Writing and Pronounciation, or rather they produce one where there was none before; for the *u* in all theſe Words, except in a few where it is generally omitted in the common Spelling, as *Horror*, *Terror*, is at leaſt as much felt in the Pronounciation as the retained Vowel *o*. Some have, unhappily enough, ſubjected to the ſame Innovation other Words, which contain the Dipthong *ou*, though they have no Relation at all to the LATIN, and write *Endeavur*, *Neighbor*, *Behavior*. Why don't they preſcribe this hated *u* in *Adjectives* too; and inſtead of *invidious*, *odious*, *glorious*, write *invidios*, *odios*, *glorios*? As they have gone ſo far, I can ſee no good Reaſon why they ſhould ſtop ſhort here.

Trifles betray the Character: And it is ſomewhat ſtrange, if it has eſcaped the Penetration of thoſe Philoſophers who have employed Part of their Talents in characteriſing the Age, that there hardly needed any other Inſtance to diſtinguiſh the preſent as an *unmanly* one than this very Averſion to the honeſt Vowel *u*; without whoſe Aſſiſtance it would be impoſſible to pronounce ſome of the moſt important and moſt intereſting Words, to any thing of a Man, in the whole *Engliſh* Language. And it is not unworthy our Obſervation here, that a late noble Author, whoſe Parts were manly enough in the earlier Days of his Life, did not begin to *caſtigate* his Spelling after this Manner, till he was conſiderably advanced in Years.

Of New Words.

IT is the eaſieſt Thing imaginable to coin Words. The moſt ignorant of the Mobility are apt to do it every Day, and are laughed at for it. What beſt can juſtify the introducing a new Word is Neceſſity, where there is not an eſtabliſhed one to expreſs your meaning. But while all the World underſtands what is meant by the Word *Pleaſure*, which ſounds very well too, what Occaſion can there be for ſaying * *Volupty?*

Nothing can deform a Language ſo much as an Inundation of new Words and Phraſes. It is, indeed, the readieſt way to demoliſh it. If there is any need to illuſtrate the barbarous Effect which a Mixture of new Words muſt produce, only conſider how a Diſcourſe, patched all over with Sentences in different Languages, would ſound; or how oddly it would ſtrike you in a ſerious Converſation to hear, from the ſame Perſon, a Mixture

* See ſome poſthumous Works publiſhed a few Years ago in *Defence* of our holy Religion.

of all the various Dialects and Tones of the ſeveral Counties and Shires of the three Kingdoms, tho' it is ſtill the ſame Language. To make it ſenſible to the Eye; how greatly would a Mixture of *Roman*, *Italick*, *Greek*, and *Saxon* Characters deform a Page? A Picture, imitating the Style of different Maſters, which is commonly called a Gallery of Painters, can never be pleaſing for the ſame Reaſons, want of Union and Harmony.

The preſent licentious Humour of coining and borrowing Words, ſeems to portend no good to the *Engliſh* Language: And it is grievous to think with what *Volupty* two or * *poetararorencouroac* eminent Perſonages have *opiniatred* the *Inchoation* of ſuch *futile* Barbariſms.

In ſhort, the Liberty of coining Words ought to be uſed with great Modeſty. *Horace*, they ſay, gave but two, and *Virgil* only one to the *Latin* Tongue,

* The Word for the Number *three*, in one of the *American* Languages, which, to judge by this Specimen, cannot be barbarous for want of Polyſyllables.

which

which was ſqueamiſh enough not to ſwallow thoſe, even from ſuch Hands, without Reluctance.

I cannot conclude without putting our Writers and Speakers in mind of an excellent Advice from Mr. *Pope* on this Subject of new and old Words:

* *Be not the firſt by whom the new are tried,*
Nor yet the laſt to lay the old aſide.

Of SUPERANNUATED WORDS.

INSTEAD of creating a Parcel of awkward new Words, I imagine it would be an Improvement to degrade many of the old ones from their Peerage. I am but a private Man, and without Authority; but an abſolute Prince, if he was of my Opinion, would make it capital to ſay *encroach* or *Encroachment*, or any thing that belongs to *encroaching*. I would commit *inculcate*, for all its Latinity, to the Care of the Paviours; and it ſhould never appear above Ground again. If you have the leaſt Sympathy with the

* See Mr. POPE's *Eſſay on Criticiſm.*

human Ear, never ſay *Purport* while you breathe; nor *betwixt*, except you have firſt repeated *between* till we are quite tired of it. *Methinks* ſtrongly reſembles the broken Language of a *German* in his firſt Attempts to ſpeak *Engliſh*. *Methought* lies under the ſame Objection, but it ſounds better.

It is full Time that *froward* ſhould be turned out of all good Company, eſpecially as *perverſe* is ready at hand to ſupply his Place. *Vouchſafe* is a very civil Gentleman; but as his Courteſy is ſomewhat old-faſhioned, we wiſh he would *deign* or *condeſcend*, or *be pleaſed* to retire.

From what rugged Road, I wonder, did *ſwerve deviate* into the *Engliſh* Language?——But this *Subject Matter!*---In the Name of every thing that's diſguſting and deteſtable, what is it? Is it one or two ugly Words? What's the Meaning of it? Confound me if I ever could gueſs! Yet one dares hardly ever peep into a Preface, for fear of being ſtared in the Face with this naſty *Subject Matter*.

Wittol

Wittol is an old-faſhioned, ill-ſounding Word; but as there is frequent Occaſion for it, and no other Word ſo perfectly expreſſes its Meaning, we cannot afford to part with it.

But to pick out all the awkward old Words, which continue to be as current amongſt us as the worn-out Sixpences, it would be neceſſary to peruſe the Dictionary from A to Z. A moſt deſperate uncomfortable Labour! As Heart-breaking a Taſk as it would be to wade thro' half a Volume of the *Statutes at large*; nay, by Heaven, I would almoſt as ſoon take it upon me to read the moſt inſipid Tragedy that has been brought upon the Stage theſe ſeven Years. But if one could ſubmit to this Labour, and ſhould preſume to ſet a Mark upon every Word one did not reliſh, there may be People of a different Opinion; and no private Perſon has Authority enough to prohibit the Uſe of any Word, if he finds it ever ſo intolerable to his own Ear. For my Part, I ſhall endeavour to paſs through Life as inoffenſively as poſſible,

ſible, both to the World and my own Conſcience; and hope, and pray, I may never be reduced to the Neceſſity of uſing * *One* WORD, *which dying, I would wiſh to blot.*

Of MUSIC.

MUSIC, I preſume, can no further be properly called one of the imitative Arts, than as it expreſſes the Paſſions; and in this Reſpect only can be admitted, as the Siſter of Poetry and Painting. So that mere Harmony has little Pretenſion to ſuch an Alliance; for it is no more Muſic than mere Verſification is Poetry.

The *Italian* Compoſitions, I ſpeak of the modern ones, for the moſt part mean nothing beyond harmonious Sound; and are as much inferior to whatever is truly pathetic in Muſic, as a Tragedy, which depends upon Noiſe and Shew, is to a plain paſſionate one, which repreſents a natural and moving Picture of Life, and of the human Mind. A Family Piece,

* See the Epilogue to Mr. *Thomſon's* CORIOLANUS.

even

even ſuch an one as the celebrated Work of *Vandyke* at *Wilton*, where, tho' the Drawing is exact, and the Attitudes eaſy and natural, the Figures are all gaping and unemployed, is a mighty tame Performance when compared with a grand Hiſtory by *Raphael*, *Rubens*, or the ſame *Vandyke* himſelf, where every thing is expreſſive, warm, paſſionate, and intereſting.

But it is not even mere Harmony; Difficulty of Execution is the Sublime, at which the greateſt Part of our modern Maſters aſpire; as if it required the leaſt Genius either to compoſe or execute difficult Muſic. While theſe are the Objects of Emulation amongſt our Compoſers and Performers, the Opera is likely to *continue* a moſt raviſhing Entertainment.

We run mad, or rather fooliſh, after this imported Muſic; while perhaps we have much better of our own. Moſt of the modern *Italian* Compoſitions only trifle with the Ear: The *Welch*, the *Scotch*, the *Iriſh* Muſic, reaches the Heart.

The

The Productions of our preſent *Italian* Maſters are thrummed over for a Seaſon, becauſe they are new; and forgot for ever afterwards, becauſe when you have heard them twenty Times, you find them ſtill as inſipid as at firſt. The Muſic, which charmed theſe Iſlands perhaps long before the boaſted Revival of this Art in *Italy*, or rather in *Flanders*, is as eſtabliſhed as the ancient Claſſics; and thoſe Compoſitions, ſhort and ſimple as they are, never become thread-bare, but give Delight and Rapture every time they are heard.

There is a certain Reſemblance of Air between the Muſic of the ancient *Britons*, the *Iriſh*, and the *Scotch*; and yet they are all very diſtinguiſhable from one another. There is a remarkable Difference of Character even between the Muſic of the North and the South of *Scotland*. The northern is generally martial, for the moſt part melancholy, and bears a ſtrong Reſemblance to the *Iriſh*: the Southern is paſtoral and amorous, with ſuch an Air of tender melancholy, as Love and Solitude, in

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a wild romantic Country, are apt to inſpire. Each of them has a Wildneſs peculiar to itſelf. The wild Spirit of the South breathes a ſweeter Air of rural Solitude; that of the North is more ſolemn, and ſometimes what one might almoſt call dreadful. Beſides, the gay ſprightly Airs which each of them has produced, are in as different Styles as the Genius and Manners of the People in the two Extremities of *Scotland*, or the Face of the Countries they inhabit; both of which are wild, but I believe, with a very different Air.

The *Britiſh* Poetry is univerſally allowed, by the beſt Judges of both, to be much ſuperior to the *Italian*; and why ſhould you wonder to find the Muſic of the one Country brought into Competition with that of the other? The Muſic of theſe Iſlands ſeem to agree in Character with that of the ancients, which, from the Accounts we have of it, excelled in Simplicity and Paſſion. How ſimple the Muſic muſt have been that delighted *Greece* in the Days of *Alcæus*, *Sappho*, *Pindar*, and

Anacreon, ſeems to appear from the very Make of their capital Inſtrument the Lyre.

Of English Verse.

RHYME, we have often been told, is a modern Invention; tho', if that was a Crime, it might perhaps be proved to be not ſo very modern neither. It is reckoned a barbarous one by ſome Pedants; who finding, I ſuppoſe, by the Opinion of better Judges than themſelves, that it is abominable in *Greek* and *Latin*, conclude that it muſt not be leſs ſo in *French* and in *Engliſh*. The contrary is evident to every one that has Ears and dares think for himſelf: for in *Engliſh* Rhime is capable of much Harmony; and the *French* can have no Verſification without it. But ſome People, who ought to know better, ſeem to make no Allowance for the original Deference between one Language and another; and are ready to quarrel with the *Engliſh* as a barbarous Language, becauſe it is not *Latin* or *Greek*. They do not conſider that every Language has Powers and Graces peculiar

culiar to itſelf; and that what is becoming in one would be quite ridiculous in another. Of this it is ſufficient to produce one obvious Example: The Tranſpoſition of Words, which gives ſuch a Grace and Spirit to the *Greek* and *Latin* Languages, and without which they would become deteſtably flat and inſipid, does not at all ſuit the Genius of the *Engliſh*; except ſometimes in Poetry: And, by the way, I am afraid there are too many ungraceful Tranſpoſitions current amongſt our *Engliſh* Poets.

But it is not only a few obſcure Pedants who are thus diſſatisfied with their Mother-tongue; and would be glad for its Improvement to torture it from its native Shape, ſome into *Latin* and others into *French*: For Attempts of this Nature have been actually made by Men of ſuperior Note. Sir *Philip Sidney*, who, notwithſtanding his affected Manner, muſt be allowed to have poſſeſt a great Share of Genius, would every now and then ſpur up his gallant *Engliſh* into a moſt unbecoming ridiculous Trot after the *Greek* and

and *Latin* Hexameters. It is certainly impoſſible to introduce the *Greek* and *Latin* Meaſures into *Engliſh* Poetry with any Succeſs; yet Sir *Philip* was fond of this Project, and purſued it with a ſtrange Obſtinacy. He recommended it to *Spenſer*; but *Spenſer* had too true an Ear to reliſh ſuch awkward unnatural Verſification, or countenance it by his Example. At leaſt there is nothing remains of him to ſhew that he ever practiſed it. There have been Attempts made ſince to the ſame Purpoſe by *Milton* and ſome later Authors. But there never was any thing ſeen ſo ungraceful or ſo deſpicably pedantick as all Eſſays of that Kind which have hitherto appeared. I do not know that it has ever yet been tried, except by *Milton* in ſome Parts of his *Samſon*; but of all the *Greek* or *Latin* Meaſures, the Iambic ſeems the moſt capable of being adopted into the *Engliſh* Poetry.

I have either read or heard that a Poet of the laſt Century, whom I ſhall not name, becauſe I am not perfectly ſure of the Fact, pretended to ſome Secrets in Verſification, which

which he did not chuſe to communicate. If it was ſo, it ſhewed a Jealouſy unworthy of ſo great a Maſter of Numbers: He might ſafely enough, for his own Superiority, have publiſhed thoſe Secrets whatever they were; for it is impoſſible they could ever be of much Uſe. He could eaſily adviſe you to vary your Pauſes, and tell you which are the moſt graceful: but theſe and all ſuch Precepts are nothing to the Purpoſe; a good Ear will naturally produce Harmony without the leaſt Regard or Attention to Rules; and there is no Cure for a bad one. The only Way to improve the Ear, whether good or bad, is to accuſtom it to the moſt harmonious Writing.

Blank Verſe admits of a greater Variety of Pauſes than Rhime, and is partly for that Reaſon the fitteſt for Works of any conſiderable Length. But in *Engliſh* Poetry I queſtion whether it is poſſible, with any Succeſs, to write Odes, Epiſtles, Elegies, Paſtorals, or Satires, without Rhime. And it happens luckily, that in

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theſe ſhort Pieces the Ear has not Time to be tired with the Return of the Chimes: which, in my humble Opinion, had better ſometimes play a little falſe to one another than be for ever ſcrupulouſly exact; provided ſuch Licences never ſhock the Ear.

It does not require a very exquiſite Ear to write too ſmoth or even harmonious Lines runing: Yet in Rhime, a Poet, who is always very careful to poliſh his Couplet, may paſs with the Multitude for a great Maſter in Verſification. But as long as his Harmony is confined within ſuch narrow Bounds, he writes but like a School-boy, who keeps in the Line only with the Help of ruled Paper.

Dr. *Swift* and Mr. *Pope* took Offence, one does not know why, at the Triplet, and very rarely condeſcended to admit it into their Verſe. It is true, it had been uſed to a nauſeous Exceſs by ſome taſteleſs Writers; and Mr. *Pope's* own Imitation of *Rocheſter* might juſtly enough give him

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a Diſguſt to the Triplet for his whole Life. Yet it contributes not a little to the Grace of *Dryden's* Verſification: and I can ſee no Reaſon why it ſhould be prohibited now; as it gives a Variety to the Numbers, which in Rhyme is ſufficiently limited to require ſuch an Help: Beſides it may often be in your Power by its Means to compreſs within three Lines, what muſt otherwiſe ſtraggle into four, and of courſe become languid and ſpiritleſs.

Variety is the Soul of Verſification; and the March of the Lines ought to be adapted to the Subject. The Meaſure is the ſame in both; but had *Horace* wrote his Epiſtles or Satires in the ſame Kind of Numbers with *Virgil's* ÆNEID, it would have been a monſtrous Impropriety; like hunting the Fox or Hare on a War-horſe, with the Equipage of a general at a Review, or on the Day of Battle. He knew very well, that in familiar Writing Dignity of Verſification

would be quite ridiculous. Accordingly in thoſe Parts his Numbers are looſe, rambling, and often almoſt proſaic. But in his moſt careleſs and licentious Periods he ſeldom or never hurts the Ear: and as often as there is any thing great in his Sentiment, his Expreſſion and Numbers riſe in Proportion, and ſuſtain themſelves with a native unaffected Dignity; till without falling he deſcends on eaſy and dexterous Wings to the familiar again.

It does not ſeem quite foreign to the preſent Subject to take ſome Notice of a certain *French* Author, who after having given it as his Opinion, that *Mr.* Pope *is the moſt harmonious of all the* Engliſh *Poets*, adds, with a very plauſible Aſſurance, that *he has reduced the ſharp Hiſſings of the* Engliſh *Trumpet to the ſweet Sounds of the Flute* *. It is no great wonder, that one who is apt to write much at random,

* *Mr.* Pope—*Eſt, je crois, le Poete le plus elegant, le plus correct, et ce qui eſt encore beaucoup, le plus harmonieux qu'ait eu l'*Angleterre. *Il a reduit les ſifflemens aigres de la trompette* Angloiſe *au ſons doux de la Flute.* VOLTAIRE—*Lettres ſur les* Anglois.

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ſhould preſume to talk ſo contemptuouſly of a manly an elegant and harmonious Language which he plainly appears to have but a very ſuperficial Acquaintance. But who ever talked before of the *Hiſſings of a Trumpet*---or of *ſharp Hiſſings*? We have all heard of the *hoarſe Trumpet*, but the *hiſſing Trumpet* is an Inſtrument we are not yet acquainted with. However, to paſs theſe little Improprieties, this Compliment to Mr. *Pope* ſhews how well our Critic is qualified to pronounce Sentence upon the *Engliſh* Poets. No one is more ſenſible than I am of Mr. *Pope's* Merit; but his blindeſt Admirer might ſtartle at the Preference beſtowed upon him here. For, not to mention the great Names of *Spenſer*, *Shakeſpear*, and *Milton*, upon ſuch an Occaſion, let us only compare Mr. *Pope* in this Point of View with a Writer upon whom, as they ſay, he formed himſelf, and whom not only in his own Opinion but in that of many others he is thought to have excelled in the Art of verſifying. It is almoſt needleſs, after this,

to ſay that I mean *Dryden*, whoſe Verſification I take to be the moſt muſical that has yet appeared in Rhime. Round, ſweet, pompous, ſpirited and various; it flows with ſuch a happy Volubility, ſuch animated and maſterly Negligence, as I am afraid will not ſoon be excelled. From the Fineneſs of his Ear, his Proſe too is perhaps the ſweeteſt, the moſt mellow and generous, that the *Engliſh* Language has yet produced.

Had Mr. *Voltaire* known as much of the *Engliſh* Poets as he pretends to do, he might have found ſomething like the *ſweet Sound of the Flute* in Mr. *Waller*; who wrote before Mr. *Pope* was born. Mr. *Voltaire*, before he preſumed to compare the *Engliſh* Poets, ſhould have known, that before Mr. *Waller* appeared there was one *Edmund Spenſer* a Poet, whoſe Verſe was not merely indolently ſmooth, but ſpirited alſo and harmonious. And if Mr. *Voltaire* was a perfect and a candid Judge in this Caſe, he would own that there was more Harmony in many of the

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Engliſh Poets—much more than the *French* Language can attain to, or an Ear debauched by the *French* Verſification is capable of reliſhing.

Of the VERSIFICATION *of* ENGLISH TRAGEDY.

THE greateſt Part of our modern Writers of Tragedy ſeem to think it enough to write mere Blank Verſe; no matter however hard it be, however void of Swelling and Harmony. Even thoſe of them who write the beſt Numbers ſtudy to be ſolemn and pompous throughout, and affect a Monotony of heroic Verſification, from the firſt Appearance of the Heroine with her Confidante to her laſt fatal Exit; without the leaſt Regard to the Variety of Paſſions, which expreſs themſelves in quick or ſlow, flowing or interrupted, in languiſhing or impetuous Movements.

The proper Verſification of *Engliſh* Tragedy is moſt certainly Blank Verſe;

but as different from the ſolemn and majeſtic Movement of heroic Poetry as the Iambic is from the Hexameter. What a monſtrous Production would a *Greek* or *Latin* Tragedy in Hexameter Verſe appear!—The Ancients found the grave Iambic their proper Meaſure for Tragedy, as it is at the ſame Time capable of all the Dignity which that Kind of Poem requires, and deſcends with the greateſt Eaſe to the Level of Proſe and Converſation. Such as is the Iambic in *Latin*, is Blank Verſe in *Engliſh:* but by no Means the Blank Verſe of *Paradiſe Loſt*.

The Numbers ought to be accommodated to the Paſſion: And though in ſome Parts of Tragedy it is proper they ſhould be ſlow or ſolemn or languiſhing, they ought for the moſt Part to run ſomewhat rambling and irregular, and often rapid and ſubſultory, ſo as to imitate the natural Cadence and quick Turns of Converſation.

Shakeſpear, who I will venture to ſay had the moſt muſical Ear of all the *Engliſh*

liſh Poets, is abundantly irregular in his Verſification: But his wildeſt Licences ſeldom hurt the Ear; on the contrary, they give his Verſe a Spirit and Variety, which prevents its ever cloying. Our modern Tragedy-Writers inſtead of uſing the Advantages of their own Language, ſeem in general to imitate the Monotony of the *French* Verſification: and the only Licence they ever venture upon is that poor tame one the ſupernumerary Syllable at the End of a Line; which they are apt to manage in ſuch a Manner as to give their Verſe a moſt ungraceful Halt. But it is not want of Ear alone which makes our common Manufacturers of Tragedy ſo inſipidly ſolemn and ſo void of Harmony: It is want of feeling. For let the Ear be what it will, if the Paſſions are warmly felt, they will naturally expreſs themſelves in their proper Tones.

Tragedy requires a greater Variety of Numbers than any other poetical Production, as it is the moſt agitated with different

ferent Paſſions. The March of every Poem of any conſiderable Length, but chiefly of Tragedy, ought to reſemble the Courſe of a River, through a large Extent of Country, diverſified with Plains, Hills and Mountains. The Stream, according as the Ground lies thro' which it flows, is either ſlow, ſmooth and ſolemn; or briſk and ſportful; or rapid, impetuous and precipitate. Such and ſo various ought to be the Verſification of Tragedy, inſtead of that ſtiff affected Importance of Movement, which is now abſurdly and awkwardly ſupported thro' the whole Courſe of theſe ſublime Performances.

But beſides this ſtudied Dignity; this inflexible Gravity of Pace; this unvaried Exactneſs of Meaſure without Spirit or Harmony; this immoveable Hardneſs and want of Fluctuation in the Lines; there is no Language ſo unnatural as that you meet with in moſt of our modern Tragedies. The Characters they repreſent are too heroic, it would ſeem, and too much

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exalted above common Life to ſpeak *after the Manner of Men.* The Misfortune is, moſt of our Tragedy-Writers labour with all their Might, and keep themſelves perpetually upon the Rack, to ſay every thing poetically: for it never enters into their Head, that the moſt natural is the moſt and the only poetical Way of ſaying common Things; except ſometimes where you can properly raiſe your Expreſſion by an eaſy Metaphor. Let the Sentiments be ſuch as beſt ſuit the Character and Situation, and they cannot be expreſt with too much Plainneſs and Simplicity; provided all Vulgariſms are as much as poſſible avoided.

As to the Characters; if it was not for a very few Exceptions, one would think the Art of drawing them was loſt amongſt our dramitic Writers. Thoſe that appear in moſt of our modern Plays, Tragedies call them or Comedies, are like bad Portraits, which indeed repeſent the human Features, but without Life or

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Meaning, or thoſe diſtinguiſhing Strokes which, in the incomparable HOGARTH and in every great Hiſtory Painter, make you imagine you have ſeen ſuch Perſons as appear in the Picture. In ſhort, thoſe mechanical Performances are as imperfect as unnatural Repreſentations of human Life, of the Manners and Paſſions of Mankind, as the *Gothick* Knights which lie along in Armour in the Temple Church are of the human Figure.

Of IMITATION.

THE humble Vanity, as one may call it, of imitating another Perſon's Manner, is one great Source of Affectation; which is generally ridiculous, and always diſagreeable. A Perſon whoſe natural Turn is genteel, if he keeps good Company, will inſenſibly acquire as much of their Manner as becomes him; but if he ſets up any one as a Pattern to be exactly imitated, his Behaviour will grow con-

conſtrained, ſtiff and affected. Such will be the conſtant Succeſs of ſo abſurd an Attempt to confine the Variety of Nature; which plainly intends that Mankind ſhould be diſtinguiſhable one from another by their Air, Voice, and Manner, no leſs than by their Faces.

A Poet, a Painter, or a Player, that imitates cloſely will never excell; and this will hold good in every thing elſe that belongs to Genius. It is true, that Education and Study are neceſſary to the Improvement of Genius; but to this Purpoſe it is ſufficient to be familiarly acquainted with the greateſt Maſters, and the earlier in Life the better. By this Means, if you delight in them, and have any Similarity with them, you will catch their Graces without affecting it; and your own original characteriſtical Manner will ſtill diſtinguiſh itſelf. But if you ſtudy to form yourſelf upon them, you become only a Copy of a Copy. The greateſt of them excell by their happy Skill

Skill in copying Nature: and if you content yourſelf with ſervilely copying them, without drawing immediately from the common Subject *Nature*; you will always be inferior to your Original, and have no Chance ever to produce any thing great or ſtriking.

In the mean Time I do not imagine that true Genius was ever much hurt by imitating. For tho' it is natural for young People to imitate a favourite Author at firſt, it is not probable that true Genius will ſubmit to be ſo fettered long.

Of WRITING *to the* TASTE *of the* AGE.

WHATEVER ſome have pretended, one may reaſonably enough doubt whether ever an Author wrote much below himſelf from any Cauſe but the Neceſſity of writing too faſt. When this happens to a Writer who, with the Advantages of Leiſure and eaſy Cir-

Circumſtances, is capable of producing ſuch Works as might charm ſucceeding Ages, it is a Diſgrace to the Nation and the Times wherein ſuch a Genius had the Misfortune to appear.

It belongs to true Genius to indulge its own Humour; to give a Looſe to its own Sallies; and to be curbed, reſtrained and directed by that ſound Judgment alone which neceſſarily attends it. It belongs to it to improve and correct the public Taſte; not to humour or meanly proſtitute itſelf to the groſs or low Taſte which it finds. And you may depend upon it, that whatever Author labours to accommodate himſelf to the Taſte of his Age —Suppoſe it, if you pleaſe, this preſent Age—the ſickly Wane, the impotent Decline of the eighteenth Century; which from a hopeful Boy became a moſt inſignificant Man; and for any thing that appears at preſent will die a very fat drowſy Blockhead, and be damned to eternal Infamy and Contempt: Every ſuch Author

I ſay, though he may thrive as far as an Author can in the preſent Age, will by Degrees languiſh into Obſcurity in the next. For tho' naked and bare-faced Vanity; tho' an active Exertion of little Arts, and the moſt unremitting Perſeverance in them; tho' Party, Cabal, and Intrigue; tho' accidental Advantages, and even whimſical Circumſtances; may conſpire to make a very moderate Genius the Idol of the implicit Multitude: Works that lean upon ſuch fickle Props, that ſtand upon ſuch a falſe Foundation, will not be long able to ſupport themſelves againſt the Injuries of Time. Such Buildings begin to totter almoſt as ſoon as their Scaffolding is taken down.

But if you find it neceſſary to comply with the Humour of your Age; the Writing beſt calculated to pleaſe a falſe Taſte is what has ſomething of the Air of good Writing, without being really ſo. For to the vulgar Eye the Specious is more ſtriking than the Genuine. The beſt Writing is often too plain, too ſimple, too unaffected, and too delicate to ſtir the callous Organs

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of the Generality of Critics, who ſee nothing but the tawdry Glare of Tinſel, and are deaf to every thing but what is ſhockingly noiſy to a true Ear. They are ſtruck with the fierce glaring Colours of old *Frank*; with Attitudes and Expreſſions violent, diſtorted and unnatural: while the true, juſt and eaſy, the graceful, the moving, the ſublime Repreſentations of *Raphael* have not the leaſt Power to attract them. The bullying, noiſy March in *Judas Macchabeus* has perhaps more ſincere Admirers than that moſt pathetic one in *Saul*: and in Converſation Pertneſs and mere Vivacity is more felt by the general run of Company than eaſy unaffected Wit; as flaſhy, bouncing, flatulent Cyder ſeems to promiſe more Spirit than the ſtill Vigour of reſerved *Madeira*.

But the eaſieſt, as well as the moſt effectual Way of writing to the bad Taſte of your Age, is to ſet out while your Genius is yet upon a Level with it. Accordingly, if you have a Son who begins to diſplay a hopeful Bloom of Imagination

be ſure to publiſh, with all the Advantages that can be procured, the very firſt Eſſays of his Genius. They will hardly be too good to pleaſe; and beſides, they have a Chance to be received with particular Favour and Admiration as the Productions of a young Muſe. When he has thus taken Poſſeſſion of the public Ear, he may venture, as his Genius ripens, to do his beſt; he may write as well as he can, perhaps without much Danger of ſinking in Reputation. The Renown of his firſt crude Eſſays will be ſufficient to prejudice the Mobility, great and ſmall, in Favour of the moſt exquiſite Pieces he can produce afterwards. But if he muſt live by his Wit, the beſt Thing you can do for him is to tranſplant him, as early as poſſible, to PARIS; where in the worſt of Days, in the moſt *Gothic* Muſe-deteſting Reign, there is ſtill ſome Shelter afforded to the moſt delicate as well as the moſt uncommon Flower that bloſſoms in the human Mind. In that gay ſerene and genial Climate the Muſes are ſtill more

more or leſs cultivated, tho' not with the ſame Ardour and Paſſion in every Age; as appears from the following Paſſage tranſlated from a * *French* Author, who wrote about the beginning of the preſent Century. " Almoſt all the Arts have in " their Turns experienced that Diſguſt " and Love of Change which is natural " to Mankind. But I don't know that " any one of them has felt it more than " Poetry; which in ſome Ages has been " exalted to a triumphal Heighth, in " others neglected, diſcouraged, and deſ-" piſed. About ſixty Years ago, under " the Adminiſtration of one of the greateſt " Geniuſſes that ever *France* produced, " Poetry found itſelf amongſt us at its " higheſt Pitch of Glory. Thoſe who " cultivated the Muſes were regarded with " particular Favour: This Art was the " Road to Fortune and dignified Stations. " But in theſe Days this Ardour ſeems " to be conſiderably abated. We do not

* Defenſe de la Poeſie; par M. l'Abbé *Meſſieu. Memoires de Literature*, Tome 2de.

" appear to be extremely ſenſible to poe-
" tical Merit, *&c.*"

Of PHYSIOGNOMY, *or the* SIMILITUDE *between the* PERSON *and the* MIND.

THAT the Face is a falſe Glaſs is a vulgar Error, and ſeems to have taken its Riſe from a few Exceptions: For all Mankind are ſo much Phyſiognomiſts that whoever happens to find himſelf miſtaken, tho' but for once, joins the Cry of the Proverb. All are not alike ſkilled in Faces, any more than in unravelling of Characters; even the moſt penetrating Eye may be miſtaken: yet I will preſume to ſay, that the Face is ſeldom a falſe Glaſs; and when it proves ſo, it is generally the Fault of the Beholder. Perhaps indeed Nature has made ſome Cheats, ſome to appear worſe, many much better than they are. This is of a Piece with her uſual Variety, and was perhaps partly intended to check the Preſumption of Man-

Mankind in judging too raſhly of one another. Yet ſtill the Face is not a falſe Glaſs. On the contrary, where the Qualities of the Mind are eminent, it generally ſhews them. For the Features of the Mind commonly follow thoſe of the Face; as the Figure of moſt Animals, whoſe Characters are ſtrong, is expreſſive of their Nature. Tho' you had never heard of a Lion, a Tiger, a Serpent, or an Alligator, it is natural to think you would at the firſt Sight be afraid of them rather than of a Hare, or even a Horſe, whoſe Appearance might prove formidable, but more from his Size than his Make.

The Mind is for the moſt part viſible in the Perſon. Thus, a beariſh Figure is almoſt certainly the Rhind or Huſk of a rude rough Soul, never to be poliſhed by any Cultivation. If you find any Sweetneſs in the Kernel of ſuch a rugged Shell, it is more than you ought to expect; for a Man is one Thing, and a Cheſnut another. The Voice too is in general harſh or ſweet, conformably to the Fea-

tures; and where Faces reſemble one another, you'll meet with a remarkable Similitude in the Voice.

Senſe and Virtue are often to be found under a plain Face and clumſey Figure; but Elegance and Delicacy of Mind generally appear in the Perſon. Where a falſe and ſpecious Elegance appears in the Face, you may expect the ſame in the Mind; and the Herd of Mankind will admire them more than the true. Sometimes you meet with a delicate and elegant Mind under a Face that cannot properly be called handſome: but then you will generally obſerve a Spirit and Expreſſion in ſuch a Face that pleaſes a true Eye much more than mere regular Beauty; for the beſt Part of Beauty is Air, Meaning and Expreſſion.

The ancient *Greeks*, beſides their being the moſt ingenious and elegant, were the moſt beautiful Race of Mortals that ever appeared in the World. The modern *Greeks* preſerve the fine Mould of their Anceſtors; and, if they were bleſt with Liberty, would probably in a ſhort Time exceed

exceed all their Neighbours in every Excellence that human Nature can boaſt of, whether ornamental or ſolid. Exquiſite Organs are, I believe, for the moſt part, beautiful too; and it is better to have a handſome Ear than a very large one. Tho' the latter is by the Laws of the animal Oeconomy more favourably contrived for the over-hearing of a Whiſper.

It is a common Obſervation, that the Painter conſtantly draws the fineſt *Hands* whoſe own is of an elegant Make. This is univerſally aſcribed to a Cauſe which is perhaps more obvious and plauſible than true: For the Painter often draws a Hand in Attitudes in which he never ſees his own. It was probably more owing to ſomething within themſelves, than to the different Stiles of Nature to which they were accuſtomed, that RUBENS and RAPHAEL are ſo different in their Ideas of Beauty and their Repreſentations of the human Form. VANDYKE ſtudied under RUBENS; and as he lived in the ſame Country, was accuſtomed to the ſame

Kind of Objects with his Maſter: Yet their Works are as different as their Perſons were; the one robuſt, but rather clumſey; the other handſome and genteel. In ſhort, the Productions of the Genius ſeem to be a Kind of Propagation, and bear a Family Reſemblance to the Parent.

Of PREJUDICES, *political, religious, or national.*

THIS ungenerous Spirit, theſe ill-natured Humours are ſo extremely abſurd, that if ſtrong Inſtances of them were not ſeen every Day, it would be impoſſible for a Man of Senſe to believe them. For my own part, if I am totally free from any of the common Weakneſſes of Mankind, I take it to be from this. What is it to me what any Man's Principles are as to Religion or Government? He has perhaps as good a Right as I, perhaps a better, to keep ſteady to the Principles in which he was educated. My Religion may, for want of early Inſtruction, appear

pear as ſtrange to him as his can to me. Theſe Things are all merely accidental and the Effect of Education: For a hot-headed Churchman, bred at any Proteſtant Univerſity, or the ſoureſt Chriſtian that ever diſſented from the Orthodox Church of *England*, would have been as violent a Mahometan, if he had received his Syſtem of Religion from the MUFTI at *Conſtantinople*. Can it be ſuppoſed, that Heaven puts itſelf at the Head of any religious Party!—I humbly think it appears plain enough, that the Almighty who diſplays ſuch infinite Variety in all his Works, no more intended that all Mankind ſhould be of the ſame Religion, than that they ſhould all be of one Colour, ſpeak the ſame Language, obſerve the ſame Cuſtoms, and wear the ſame Dreſs: And it is not leſs reaſonable than charitable to believe, that the Virtuous of all Religions are equally acceptable to the univerſal Father. For little as we know of Heaven, I hope we may, without any Blaſphemy, preſume

that

that the ſuperior Powers are at leaſt as reaſonable as the beſt of *us*.

It is ſtill not quite out of Nature for People in certain Humours, whether from the Wine or the Weather, to grow ſour to one another for Matters of mere Opinion, nay, and proceed to downright quarrelling, either for the Glory of God, or their own Vanity. But the utmoſt Effort of narrow-thinking, and what appears perfectly aſtoniſhing, is the Averſion which ſome People bear in their Minds to all thoſe who did not happen to be born on the ſame Spot, in the ſame little Iſland, or the ſame Corner of an Iſland with themſelves. Good God! would you have all the World to have been born in *Ireland?* In the Name of every thing that is whimſical, what does it ſignify where a Man was born? Can it be either a Merit or a Crime to have been born in any particular Spot of this Globe, were it in *St. Giles's*, the *Old-Bailey*, or even within the execrable Walls of *Newgate* iſetlf? One would think they muſt

be

be at a prodigious Loſs for ſomething to value themſelves upon who are proud of the Place of their Birth. Moſt People pretend to laugh at what is called Family Pride: and yet, tho' according to nice Herald-like Ceremony, the Son, as the better Gentleman, ought to take the Wall of the Father; this Kind of Pride is perhaps not quite a proper Object of Ridicule: for whoever eſteems himſelf upon Account of his noble Anceſtry, muſt of courſe emulate their Virtues, and be afraid to violate their Memory by any Action unworthy of them. It is needleſs, and might be miſtaken for Flattery, to produce the many ſhining Examples of this generous Emulation which adorn the preſent Age. Even without any very diſtinguiſhing Merit of his own, the Son has often ſome Claim to a favourable Reception for the Sake of his Father. But he ſtands upon a very bleak Situation who has nothing to ſhelter him from Contempt but the Name of his Country. For Heaven's Sake what Country is it the

moſt

moſt honourable to have been born in? What Climate? what Latitude?—Under the Equator? Or at what particular Diſtance from it? I hope it is not in thoſe Climates where the Weather is the fineſt, and the Seaſons the moſt agreeable. But is there a Country, at leaſt in *Chriſtendom*, where the Generality of the People, rough as they run, are not as ſtupid and as wicked as the arch Enemy of Mankind would wiſh to make them? The great Bulk of the *Iriſh*,—I'm ſorry to ſay it,—are bad enough, very ragged Cattle indeed; it is in vain to deny it—The general run of the *Scotch*, as well as of the *French*, *Spaniards*, and *Italians*, is ſo very, ſo extremely little better, that it might puzzle the moſt ſagacious Connoiſſeur to pronounce which is worſt—The *Engliſh*, tho' for every Kind of Merit, as eſtimable a People as any in *Europe*, are, with Regard to many of their Individuals, juſt as unhappy as the reſt. God preſerve us, what ſtrange Animals, what ſhabby Chriſtians have had the Honour to be born in

the

the Metropolis of *Great Britain!*—of reputable, moſt reputable Parents too!—in this very *London!* and not to talk of *Rag-fair* or *Drury-lane*, in the ſuperb Neighbourhood of *Groſvenor-ſquare* and *St. James's* itſelf.

But the Merit or Value ſtamped upon any Animal from the Meridian of its Nativity, is not more fantaſtical than that which it receives from the Place of its Education. Yet there are thouſands who dream, that no Science is to be learnt but within thoſe very Walls whence after many Years Reſidence themſelves had come into the World with a moderate enough Share of Erudition. It would be highly unreaſonable to reflect upon any School becauſe a great Number of Dunces happened to have been bred there: But People of this narrow Way of thinking are really a Reproach to their Tutors. One would be ſorry to ſee any illiberal Jealouſy riſe amongſt our Univerſities for ſuch a ſimple Diſpute (a yet *tetrior quam teterrima belli cauſa)* as which of them has

has ſent out the moſt numerous Herd of learned Blockheads. For any Blockhead, whoſe Genius leads him to much poring over heavy Volumes, may become a Man of great Learning in the moſt illiterate Ground, in the moſt unconſecrated you can name. But for their own Sakes it is to be hoped, that thoſe learned Bodies will agree to ſuppreſs all Animoſities of this Nature; leſt in the Courſe of their Altercations it ſhould be diſcovered, that all thoſe Seminaries of Learning, however dignified with the ſpecious Titles of Academies, Colleges, or Univerſities, are mere artful Impoſitions upon the Ignorance of Mankind. For there are many Inſtances to prove with what ſmall Helps from Education good native Parts may ſhine: And a Man may turn out a very conſiderable Blockhead without ever having been taught Metaphyſics.

As the moſt hopeful Antidote to the Poyſon of this very domeſtic Education, one would preſcribe a Viſit to foreign

Parts.

Parts. And if after a Ramble through *Europe*, the obſtinate Malignity ſhould ſtill ſhew itſelf in freſh Eruptions, it might be worth while to try a ſeven Years Reſidence in *America*: If the Patient returns before he is thoroughly cured, I can ſee no good Reaſon why he ſhould not be tranſplanted for Life.

But a ſtrong Obſtacle to the Cure of this Folly, is the Advantage which ſome *honeſt* People find in fomenting it. For the Mob, I mean the great Bulk of Mankind, in judging of Men are mere Botaniſts: They diſtinguiſh them only by their outward Types; the Claſs or Tribe they belong to, or *ſeem* to belong to. For want of being able to penetrate a little deeper into the Character, they prefer a Man for the Cock of his Hat, or the Healths he toaſts; and are the more obſtinate in their Attachment to him, the leſs Reaſon they can give for it. As the Votaries of any Religion are the more zealous and violent, the further its Prin-

Principles are removed from common Senſe.

To conclude, as we begun, with Religion. It is nothing to me in whom or in what any Man believes. I have no Objection in the World to an honeſt Man, becauſe he believes in MAHOMET, as long as he gives himſelf no impertinent Trouble about my Faith. Nay, I could live upon good Terms even with a Deiſt; provided he keeps within the Bounds of Decency, and does not carry with him thro' Life that juvenile Vanity, which will not ſuffer him to be quiet, till he has told all the World that he laughs at thoſe Things which they conſider as the moſt ſacred and inviolable.

Of

Of moral ATTRACTION *and* REPULSION.

Oderunt hilarem triſtes, triſtemq; jocoſi,
Sedatum celeres, agilem gnavumq; remiſſi.
HOR.

The Sullen hate the Gay, the Gay the Sad,
The Slow the Active, and the Quick the Staid.

THIS was obſerved by one who knew Mankind as thoroughly as moſt Writers. And it is an Obſervation may juſtly be extended to all People of oppoſite Diſpoſitions. For every Knave naturally hates an honeſt Man; and the dimmeſt moſt miſty Blockhead has Penetration enough, except you would rather call it Inſtinct, to diſcover a Man of Parts; and cold Virulence enough to deteſt him. The Miſer abhors the Man who generouſly enjoys his Fortune; and hopes to ſee the Prodigal ſtarve. As this is the Caſe, it would require ſome Skill in the Doctrine of Chances to calculate how many Enemies a Man of Senſe and Integrity is likely to have for one Friend.

On the other hand, People of ſimilar Characters are apt to like one another. There is not a genuine Ruffian in *Turkey*, not even in *Chriſtendom*, ſo abandoned to all Senſe of Humanity, ſo void of all Sympathy with the human-kind, that would not take ſome little Pains at leaſt to favour the Eſcape of the Wretch who had juſt murdered his Father. Upon theſe two Principles of Averſion and Attachment, if they are not rather, in the preſent View, one and the ſame, it is probable that the moſt important of human Affairs ſometimes depend. It is perhaps more owing to this than to any ſingle Cauſe beſides, that one Age is ſo different from another. For a very few Individuals in a Nation may have Influence enough to throw the great Weight of its Buſineſs into ſuch Hands as ſhall render it either glorious or contemptible, either miſerable or proſperous.

But it is now full Time to conclude: For when the Writer is tired, it is highly prob-

probable the Reader muſt begin to yawn, if he is not faſt aſleep already. For which Reaſons, what I had further to ſay ſhall be diſpatched in as few Words as poſſible, and without a very ſcrupulous Regard to Method or Regularity.

SENTENCES.

THE ſententious Manner of Writing is apt to be dry, and to give Diſguſt by its oracular Air and a dogmatical overbearing Pretenſion to Wiſdom. Perhaps it would be better, if its Severity was alleviated with a comfortable Mixture of human Nonſenſe. For to be perpetually *wiſe*, is forbidding, unſocial, and ſomething that does not become human Nature, as it does not belong to it. Why ſhould a School-maſter, a Parſon, or an Apothecary, affect to be as ſolemn and ſublime the whole Year round, as if he was a Seraph or an Archangel come to *dwell amongſt us?*

The World has been ſhamefully impoſed upon by many an important Fool: But no Man of Senſe ever took any Pains to appear wiſe; as no honeſt Man ever uſed any Tricks to diſplay his own Integrity.

Moſt Fools, and many ſenſible People, are conceited: But People of the beſt Senſe never are ſo.

Affectation labours with a Diligence that fatigues every Spectator, but with infallible Succeſs, to defeat its own Purpoſe; for inſtead of creating Love or Admiration, it provokes our Averſion and Contempt. The moſt amiable People are always the leaſt affected. Let us make the beſt of what Nature has done for us: She may be improved, but all Attempts to alter her from her original Shape will only expoſe us to Ridicule. That awkward Beaſt the Dromedary, as long as he has any Senſe, will never pretend to be a BAJAZET or an OTHELLO.

I have heard of a poor Gentleman who uſed to be grievouſly tormented with vio-

violent Fits of the Head-ach, becauſe a celebrated Poet was ſubject to that Complaint. Such a Head-ach I ſuppoſe as JUPITER felt juſt before he was delivered of PALLAS by the rough Midwifry of VULCAN's Hammer; which ſeems to give a broad Hint towards the Cure of this Kind of *Cephalalgia*, as the learned Doctors delight to call it.

Affectation is the Bane of every Thing. An honeſt, plain, downright Blockhead, ſuppoſing him at the ſame Time good-natured, may not only be an uſeful but an agreeable Creature. But when a Blockhead is ſeized with the Whim of being a fine Gentleman or a Wit, the Lord have Mercy upon him—and us.

I am not offended at the Inſipidity of Mr. FITZ DOTTERELL's Obſervation, nor even at its Impertinence, becauſe I know he meant me no Harm: What provokes me, is that he calls it a Joke.

A Fellow who, without a Grain of Wit or Humour will always be joking, is not

only a diſagreeable and contemptible Companion, but a dangerous one. For his awkward, unwary Nonſenſe will be apt one Time or another to make him ſtumble into a Quarrel; and he may loſe his Friend, or perhaps his Life, without the Satisfaction to ſay he has had a good Joke for it.

T'other Bottle won't do——No, nor the other Hogſhead neither—You great pale-eyed Loggerhead, you muſt have Patience—You muſt wait a good while before you rouſe Mr. TRUEWIT's Mettle—A long Time, indeed!—You muſt wait till your own Wit begins to ſparkle——I am afraid you muſt wait till you're gone. There is a ſecret Power in your Preſence enough to check every Thing that's genial——You are worſe than a Fog or the Eaſt Wind—The Candles burn dim while you're here—and the Burgundy drinks as flat as Port. Good Night. Here's to your good Repoſe. May you ſleep like any Porpus!——But hark'ye, good

good Mr. VAN NUMB, before you go—— You can't live without Wit it ſeems—Bleſs your fat Head! are you ſure that you know Wit when you hear it?——Let me be curſt if you do, even when you pore over it in Print at the rate of an Octavo Page in an Hour.

It is illiberal, inhuman, and unreaſonable in the higheſt Degree to inſult any Man for his being dull: But when Dullneſs pretends to Genius or Parts, it becomes a fair Object of Ridicule.

True Satire may be called the Rage of Probity, and even of Good-nature. It is the Indignation of Virtue and Wit againſt Vice, Ill-nature, and Affectation.

From Satire to Metaphyſicks is a deſperate Stride, yet we will venture it rather than defer our Opinion of this Science to any future Occaſion. We take Metaphyſicks, in the Degree to which they are carried by certain Philoſophers, to be *the Art of talking grave Nonſenſe upon Subjects that lie beyond the Reach of the*

human Underſtanding. Better talk about the Weather ſtill, or blunder thro' the Miſt of Politics; or retail thoſe inſipid daily Lies we call *News*.

I have ſeen People, that were no Fools, laugh at the wrong Place, and without being tickled, that they might not appear dull at taking a Joke. What is worſe, I have known People, who were not quite Fools neither, affect to be angry without feeling any Affront; becauſe they would not be thought to want Apprehenſion or Spirit.

Vanity, beſides the ſecret Pleaſure it gives one's ſelf, is a very thriving Quality; and it is not politic to be at any Pains to diſguiſe it, except amongſt People of the beſt Senſe. For the Generality of the World will have the ſame Opinion of you that you ſeem to have of yourſelf.

Falſe or middling Genius is almoſt always arrogant and vain. The true may be provoked to do itſelf Juſtice; but is ſeldom apt to overvalue itſelf.

Tho'

Tho' Vanity and Pride are very different Things, we may talk here of that Kind of Pride which hurts your Inferiors, and keeps thoſe at a Diſtance who are never likely to abuſe your Familiarity. It ſeems to be the Conſciouſneſs of little Minds, who are afraid of being ſeen too near. It is to be proud only where you may, with the utmoſt Safety, be ſo; for *thoſe* proud People are almoſt always mean and ſervile to ſuch as rank above themſelves.

Now that we are talking of unreaſonable Animals; there is a waſpiſh Fellow who muſt diſcharge his Venom where he dares, and every Day uſes you like a Dog—becauſe he's your *Couſin* truly, and may be free with you. When the Wind is Eaſterly, this *Couſin* becomes abſolutely intolerable. Perhaps, after all, he intends you no great Miſchief in the main. But, in my Opinion, the beſt way to manage ſuch a *Couſin* is to give him a moſt inhuman Threſhing. He'll bounce, and fling,

ſling, and raiſe a curſed Outcry; but don't ſpare him: For with Heaven's Bleſſing it will do him an infinite deal of good; and make him as civil, till he begins to forget it, as the politeſt Enemy you ever had the Happineſs to converſe with. Beſides, you'll find a ſublime Pleaſure in the Exerciſe of juſt Vengeance—By all that's Imperial, it is a Luxury almoſt too high for a Subject!

Superficial People are always the moſt oſtentatious. I ſuppoſe you may remember that you uſed to be the fondeſt and moſt vain of the thing you were but juſt beginning to learn.

Many ſhallow People make their Fortunes by the mere Force of Goſſiping. With ſome it paſſes for Knowledge of the World; whereas it is only practiſing an Art which, tho' inſupportably tedious and inſipid to Men of a different Turn, inſtead of coſting *them* any Trouble, is their native Element; for they were born Goſſips.

The

The blunt Sword is the truſty Weapon. And there is nothing ſo infallibly ſucceſsful in all Trades and Profeſſions as the Parts of a Blockhead; Plodding, Selfiſhneſs, Cunning, and Impudence: which laſt Virtue may be reckoned the chief of *theſe* Cardinal ones; for

Nullum numen abeſt ſi ſit IMPUDENTIA.

The Ambition of a Man of Parts is often diſappointed by the want of ſome common Quality, with whoſe Aſſiſtance very moderate Abilities are capable of making a great Figure.

Some People have juſt Parts enough to do their Country a great deal of Miſchief: For if their Underſtanding was the ſmalleſt Degree lower, it would be too glaringly ridiculous to employ them.

Some have died upon the Scaffold for their faithful Services to their ungrateful Country. You remember the ſhocking Cataſtrophe of thoſe great and good Men the DE WITS.—By all that's ſtern and horrible!

rible! by the black-hung Room! by the blood-thirſty ſaw-duſt! you're in the right——The ſureſt way to avoid Ingratitude, is never to do one good Thing while you live.

Many excellent Geniuſſes have been loſt. But we ought not to repine too much at this ſeeming Inattention of Providence to human Affairs; as from the ſame Cauſe perhaps a much greater Number of ſhocking Monſters have been ſmothered and ſuppreſſed. For I am afraid there are more NEROS and CARACALLAS than TITUSES or TRAJANS in private Life, who want nothing but to be Emperors to ſhew themſelves. Immortal Gods! how many thouſand CLAUDIUSES *are at this Hour aſleep* between HYDE PARK CORNER and WAPPING!

I am afraid it is eaſier to corrupt good natural Diſpoſitions by Education and Habit than to ſubdue bad ones.

There are People that were born Lyars; who tell you every Day very ſeriouſly a Parcel of inſipid unmeaning Lies, and

probably believe them. It is a mere odd kind of Weakneſs in them; they cannot help it; perhaps they are not ſenſible of it. Nay, I don't know whether there is not ſuch an abſurd Creature as a Thief that has little more Scheme or Meaning than a pilfering Jackdaw.

Tho' there are ſtrange inconſiſtent Mixtures in human Nature, there never yet was a very fine Underſtanding where the Heart was bad.

There is a Parcel of crazy worthleſs People who ſet up for Wits, and bring the Name of POET under a Kind of Diſgrace with thoſe who do not know that there can be no true Genius without a ſound Underſtanding and an honeſt Heart.

Some of thoſe People do more indiſcreet, irrational, abſurd Things than even Nature prompts them to: ſome become Sots, and affect every Thing that is indecent and ſhocking, merely that they may paſs, good God! for Men of Genius; and they

are

are admired as ſuch by the Majority of their Acquaintance for no other Reaſon.

Oddities and Singularities of Behaviour may attend Genius; when they do, they are its Misfortunes, and its Blemiſhes. The Man of true Genius will be aſhamed of them: At leaſt he never will affect to diſtinguiſh himſelf by whimſical Particularities.

In ſhort, good Senſe is the ſolid Foundation of all Genius, and of every Thing that is truly ornamental. It is neceſſary, in ſome Degree, even to a good Fidler: ſtill more ſo to one who compoſes Muſic. A Blockhead, drunk with mortal Port, might have drawled out ſuch a pitiful Strain as *God ſave our noble King*,—or *To Arms*, and *Britons Strike Home*; but he muſt have had Taſte and Genius who compoſed *Joy to great Cæſar*, or even *The Early Horn*.

Except HANDEL's Oratorio one ſeldom goes to a muſical Entertainment where the great Bulk of the Pieces is not inſipid. They have Plenty of good Muſic, but the Per-

Performers are moſt provokingly frugal of the beſt. The Reaſon I plainly take to be this: Almoſt every Scraper upon the Violin has perhaps compoſed more or leſs Muſick himſelf; and, inſtead of the Works of the great Maſters, they entertain you with their own. If Reading was a public Entertainment; if Authors were the only Readers, and the Choice were left to them, I ſuppoſe the great Writers of former Ages would ſoon be forgotten.

It is a Queſtion with me whether the Muſic of a Country is to be performed any more than its Language pronounced to Perfection, but by thoſe that have been young in it; or, what comes nearly to the ſame Thing, have been taught it young by a Native of that Country.

People of the fineſt Ear very often have not the leaſt Turn to Mimickry: While, on the contrary, ſome of the beſt Mimicks are miſ-tuned, and have not the leaſt Ear to Harmony.

It is impoſſible to make ſuch a Definition of Wit as ſhall comprehend every Kind

Kind of it. But it ſeems to conſiſt chiefly in a happy Faculty of comparing * diſtant Objects, and ſurpriſing you with the Diſcovery of a ſtriking Reſemblance where you did not dream of finding any.

The Wit of ſome, who have a large Share of it, is too much of one Kind, and proves cloying for want of Variety.

An Author, who affects to be fine in every Thing he ſays, and to write above his Subject, is juſt as ridiculous a Coxcomb as him who performs the moſt indifferent Actions with a ſtudied Grace. And this Affectation is one principal Cauſe of the awkward unnatural Language, which prevails in moſt of our modern Tragedies.

Mr. *Voltaire* obſerves very juſtly of ſome Authors, that they have done themſelves no good by endeavouring to be univerſal. It is a fooliſh enough Piece of

* In ſome ingenious Eſſays, which appeared a few Years ago in one of the daily Papers, Wit was called *a tall Faculty of the Mind.* There is ſomething odd in the Expreſſion, but the Meaning is good.

Vanity

Vanity to be ſure; for it requires no great Genius to write a ſpiritleſs Ode, an affected Epiſtle, an inſipid Satire, a flat Comedy, a cold Tragedy, and even a flimſy, foppiſh, unintereſting Epick Poem. SHAKESPEAR perhaps poſſeſſed the greateſt Compaſs of Genius that ever Man did, and could excell in every Thing, from the nobleſt Sublime down to the Burleſque.

In ſome Ages the few People of Genius ought to publiſh juſt enough to ſhew what they could have done in better Times: more is not worth their while.

If there wants any thing beſides the Applauſe of the beſt Judges to eſtabliſh the Reputation of your Performance, it is the Diſlike of the worſt. For falſe Taſte, whatever it may pretend, tho' it may even impoſe upon itſelf, at its Heart naturally hates true Genius.

I have heard talk of an ITALIAN who thought the Soldier in VANDYKE's BELISARIUS ſomething quite wonderful from a FLEMISH Painter. It would ſeem he had never heard of one RUBENS, a Native

of FLANDERS, who, *take him for all in all*, weigh him in the niceſt *Ballance*, is perhaps hardly inferior to any Painter that ITALY has produced. True Taſte is always candid, and naturally delights in true Genius, without ever enquiring from what Soil it ſprung.

I have been told, that ſome *French Abbé*, whoſe Name I forget, pronounces, with a very deciſive Air, that SHAKESPEAR underſtood all the Paſſions but *Love*.—— Good God! —— SHAKESPEAR not underſtand *Love!* ——Who does then?—— VOLTAIRE?

Love, Anger, Grief, all the Paſſions are contagious.

Love is the Cauſe of more Indiſcretions in old People perhaps than in young.

DR. SWIFT ſays, that no wiſe Man ever wiſhed himſelf younger. The Dean might perhaps have excepted a Man renowned for Wiſdom, who ſeems to have been gloomy and unhappy in his latter Years merely from want of Youth.

Died

Died by the Sting of a Snail would ſound oddly in the Bills of Mortality. Yet I have known a Woman of Beauty, Senſe, and Spirit, in Love with one of the moſt inſipid Fellows that ever glared weary Stupidity from a large dead Eye. Whence it appears, that the Infatuation of Queen MAB in the *Midſummer Night's Dream*, however extravagant it ſeems, is not quite out of Nature.

As there have been many *ſmall* Obſervations made upon *great* Claſſics, I muſt take the Liberty to venture one. *Iago* ends his Deſcription of a good Woman with

She was a Wight, if ever ſuch there were—

Here he ſtops, and *Deſdemona* aſks, *To do what?* It does not appear what leads her to this Queſtion, except you add a little Word, which ſeems to have dropt out of its Place here without being miſſed. ---Suppoſe it was to be read thus:

She was a Wight, if ever ſuch there were,
To——

Here the Buffoon pauſes, to draw the Lady into the Queſtion, which it is now natural for her to make; and to give, what he is ready to add, its full Effect of ſurpriſing and diſappointing archly.

She that was ever fair, and never proud,
Had Wit at will, and yet was never loud;
&c.

She was a Wight, if ever ſuch there were,
To——
To do what?——
To ſuckle Fools, and chronicle Small-beer.

Why do the Players, in the Part of *Richard* the Third, always ſay, *Give me a Horſe.* It not only ſounds much better, but the Meaning is, in my Opinion, more warm and ſpirited as it ſtands in *Shakeſpear.*

Give me another Horſe——Bind up my Wounds—

As

As I feel it, there is a Kind of tame Impropriety, or even Abſurdity, in that Action of HAMLET producing the two Miniatures of his Father and Uncle out of his Pocket. It ſeems more natural to ſuppoſe, that HAMLET was ſtruck with the Compariſon he makes between the two Brothers, upon caſting his Eyes on their Pictures, as they hang up in the Apartment where this Conference paſſes with the Queen. There is not only more Nature, more Elegance, and Dignity in ſuppoſing it thus; but it gives Occaſion to more paſſionate and more graceful Action, and is of Conſequence likelier to be as SHAKESPEAR's Imagination had conceived it.

But I beg Pardon for theſe Trifles: and, in Hopes that you may not all be ſo ill-natured as to take me at my Word, ſhall conclude with a Scrap of *Latin* that has, like many others, led a weary Life, tho' it

it is almoſt as inſipid a Thing of the Kind as ever came upon the Town—

Nos hæc novimus eſſe nihil.

Which, in plain *Engliſh*, means no more than that, *I am ſenſible all theſe* SKETCHES *and* SENTENCES *are mere Nothing.*

THE END.